



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

THE CORPUS CHRISTI FESTIVAL AT ST. MARY'S,  
PENNSYLVANIA.

THE traveller by the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad, when in the heart of the Appalachian chain, comes suddenly upon a German village set in the midst of a green oasis of meadows and grain fields reclaimed from the surrounding forests. This village bears the pretty name of St. Mary's, and is one of the loftiest towns in Pennsylvania, being situated on the great divide between the waters of the Susquehanna and the Ohio. Certain Redemptorist fathers and devout Catholic laymen of Philadelphia and Baltimore founded it as a Catholic community some fifty-three years ago, and settled it with adherents of their faith from Alsace, Bavaria, and Belgium. These people, owing in part no doubt to their isolation, have clung to the language, customs, dress, and religion of the fatherland with great tenacity, and form an interesting study for the student of sociology, who finds here a bit of mediæval Germany transplanted to American soil and flourishing therein. As one walks the streets of St. Mary's he hears the guttural tongue of the fatherland on every hand, and sees women in peasant dress busy at household tasks, the weaver at his hand loom, the butcher, baker, and shoemaker plying their craft in Old World style. There is a German church, German schools, German societies.

The Redemptorist fathers moved farther west after a time, and were succeeded by monks of the Benedictine order, who are now the spiritual fathers of the village. Christmas and Easter are duly observed, but the great day of the year is the Festival of Corpus Christi, in honor of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper which followed. The festival was observed this year on Sunday, June 20, with great pomp and ceremony, and we were so fortunate as to see it. Preparations for it began in St. Mary's and the outlying farms a week before. The large and beautiful German Catholic Church, where the procession was to form, was decorated with evergreens and flowers more profusely than at Christmas or Easter. On the Saturday before, the farmers brought green saplings and boughs from the woods and stuck them in the earth along the route of the procession. Baskets of cut flowers, green leaves, fresh ferns, and grasses were provided for strewing in the road before the Host, and in all German homes great preparations were made for the feast which was to follow at the close of the ceremonies, the day having as great significance in this respect as Thanksgiving in New England. The route of the procession was to be from the German church to the pretty hill-

top cemetery a half mile distant, and return by another road. At intervals along the way, wayside altars were erected, — bowers of greenery bedecked with flowers and bearing a Christ on the cross, pictures of the Virgin and saints, and other emblems of the Catholic faith. Lighted candles burned before these shrines during the ceremonies.

The day began with the celebration of low mass at eight o'clock. Long before this, the streets were filled with happy groups wending their way towards the church, all attired in gala dress, — girls in white, with long white veils floating behind, and bearing bouquets of flowers in their hands; boys each with a boutonnière in his coat lapel; mothers with babes in arms, and fathers escorting them. Great farm wagons, drawn by horses or mules, came lumbering in from the farms, their seats filled with farmer folk having the rugged German features, clad in the garb of the German peasant, and addressing one another in the language of the fatherland.

When the celebration of high mass began, at nine o'clock, the church was crowded to suffocation, and the worshippers filled the portico and esplanade without. At ten, on the conclusion of the service the procession was formed, the father prior acting as master of ceremonies. First came three acolytes in altar vestments, bearing emblems of the Catholic faith; then a standard-bearer with the banner of the Holy Childhood Society of the parish. The members of the society followed, — the boys first, and then the girls, the latter, some five hundred in number, clad in white dresses and veils, and bearing baskets of flowers, which they strewed along the road; after them the St. Mary's Silver Cornet Band, then one each of the men's and women's societies of the parish, bearing banners; after them, under a rich canopy borne by four men, came three Benedictine fathers in full canonicals, the central one, a monk of imposing presence, bearing the Sacred Host. Next came more parish societies of both sexes bearing banners; then the St. Mary's Citizen Band; then devotees in general, the whole procession numbering fully two thousand persons, and stretching from the church to the cemetery. As the head of the procession approached the first of the wayside altars, the boys uncovered their heads, and all chanted hymns in praise of the Christ and of the Sacrament. As the priests with the Sacred Host arrived before the altar, the procession halted, and the priests, kneeling before it, performed the appropriate service for Corpus Christi, and bestowed the benedictus, the whole body of people kneeling during the ceremony. The procession then continued on to the German cemetery, with its quaint Old World tombs and crosses, past the little chapel in its midst, where prayers and masses for the dead are said, and out by

another entrance. As the priests arrived at the door of the chapel the people again halted, the celebrants entered and performed the same service as at the altar. This concluded, the march was again resumed, and the procession returned to the church by another road, passing a second wayside altar, before which the solemn service was again performed. Arrived at the church, the procession was disbanded, the members returning to their homes to enjoy the feast which had been prepared for the occasion, perhaps to meet long-sundered members of the family around the board.

*Charles Burr Todd.*